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NSC BRIEFING

7 November 1956

BACKGROUND - WORLD REACTION TO SUEZ

- I. Gov'ts of W. Europe generally critical of Anglo-French push.
  - A. Italian govt considering offer of troops for UN "police force".
    - 1. Foreign Office worried over action's effects on European integration, Atlantic alliance, Italian-French relations.
  - B. Swiss Federal Councillor Petitpierre says his proposal for New "Summit" meeting motivated by felling "how near brink of war world is".
  - C. Netherlands foreign office has indicated willingness join UN "police force".
  - D. Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland have also offered to contribute to UN "police".
  - E. Spanish official reaction also unfavorable to UK, France.
- II. Latin American reaction also generally unfavorable: LA bloc in UN provided strong support for US moves.
  - A. Columbia offering battalion for "police force".
  - B. Mexican foreign minister has expressed abhorrence of Franco-British action.
  - C. Venezuelan foreign office expressing strong support for any measures leading to peaceful solution.
  - D. Chilean foreign minister emphasizing implementation of international law provisions which prevent aggression.
  - E. Ecuadoran chamber of deputies linked Egyptians with Hungarians and Poles in resolution of solidarity.

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III. Asian reaction almost universally condemnatory, with press and popular opinion often running stronger than government.

A. Most extensive in South Asia, where India led both in speed of comment and in swift diplomatic actions.

1. Nehru, in 1 Nov speech called Anglo-French action "clear and naked aggression".

B. Pakistan and Indonesia next, with press and popular demonstrations outstripping government.

1. UK information office in Jakarta burned 7 Nov.

C. All Asian states except Laos (which engaged in delicate financial negotiations with French) supported 2 Nov UN resolution for cease-fire, withdrawal of troops.

1. Arab-Asian bloc itself initiated second resolution (3 Nov), re-emphasizing need for speedy cease-fire.

D. All Arab-Asian states except Turkey, (abstained) voted for "police force" on 4 Nov.

1. Pakistan offered troops almost immediately.

2. India (7 Nov) announced willingness to supply "limited" force, if Egypt agrees.

3. Ceylon also willing to contribute token force.

IV. As to cease-fire, Asian respect for power, tendency to overlook totalitarian means while applauding ends are likely to give credit to Sov. threat, rather than UN action, and leave USSR more hero than villain in affair.

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- A. Soviet ambassador in New Delhi already telling External Affairs Ministry that USSR threat of force was designed to achieve reestablishment of peace in West Asia.
- B. As to future, Arab Asian nations will be willing to wait for arrival of UN "police force" before taking further action.
  - 1. Have already attempted to support Egypt's demand for withdrawal of troops even before arrival of UN force, but probably will not press case in face of opposition from Latin America and elsewhere.
  - 2. Would probably support any Egyptian refusal to permit British-French salvage vessels to start clearing canal before arrival of UN forces, despite strong desire of such states as India, Pakistan, Ceylon for speedy resumption of trade through canal.
  - 3. In general, Arab Asians will work hard to prevent loss of Egyptian face or any impression that Egypt is defeated nation.

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